

provision of a regulation or order issued under the Act, or any provision of a lease, license, or permit issued pursuant to the Act.

§251.3 Administrative authority and applicability.

§251.3-1 Administrative authority.

Exploration or scientific research activities authorized or conducted under this part shall be performed in accordance with the Act, the regulations in this part, OCS Orders, other orders of the Director, and other applicable statutes and regulations, and amendments thereto.

§251.3-2 Functions of Director.

The Director shall regulate all operations and other activities under this part and perform all duties prescribed by this part. The Director is authorized to issue OCS Orders and other written and oral orders and to take all other actions necessary to carry out the provisions of this part and to prevent harm or damage to, or waste of, any natural resource (including any mineral deposit in areas leased or not leased), any life (including fish and other aquatic life), property, or the marine, coastal, or human environment. The Director shall confirm oral orders in writing as soon as possible.

§251.3-3 Geological and geophysical activities under a lease.

The regulations in this part shall not apply to geological and geophysical exploration conducted by or on behalf of the lessee on a lease on the OCS. Those exploration activities shall be governed by the regulations in part 250 of this title.

§251.3-4 Geological and geophysical activities not under a lease.

The regulations in this part are applicable to permits for geological and geophysical activities issued after or unexpired as of the effective date of this final rule. Notices filed after the effective date of this final rule shall also be subject to the regulations in this part. If the regulations in this part conflict with the provisions of a permit which was issued under regulations published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on

June 23, 1976 (41 FR 25893), the requirements of the permit shall govern, except for any requirements limiting the Director's authority to inspect and require the submission of interpretations derived from information and data acquired under those permits issued after January 27, 1978, as established by part 252 of this title.

§251.3-5 General requirements of notices and permits.

(a) Geological or geophysical activities for mineral exploration or scientific research activities authorized under this part shall be conducted so that those activities do not:

- (1) Interfere with or endanger operations under any lease issued or maintained pursuant to the Act;
- (2) Cause harm or damage to aquatic life;
- (3) Cause pollution;
- (4) Create hazardous or unsafe conditions;
- (5) Unreasonably interfere with or harm other uses of the area; or
- (6) Disturb cultural resources.

(b) Any person conducting geological or geophysical activities for mineral exploration or scientific research under this part shall immediately report to the Director when these activities:

- (1) Detect hydrocarbon occurrences;
- (2) Encounter environmental hazards which constitute an imminent threat to human activity; or
- (3) Adversely affect the environment, aquatic life, cultural resources, or other uses of the area in which the exploration activity is conducted.

(c) Any person conducting shallow test drilling or deep stratigraphic test drilling geological activities under a permit for mineral exploration or scientific research under this part shall utilize the best available and safest technologies which the Director determines to be economically feasible.

(d) Authorization granted under this part to conduct geological and geophysical exploration for minerals or for scientific research shall not confer a right to any discovered oil, gas, or other minerals, or to a lease under the Act.